

ANNUAL DIVERSITY COUNCIL REPORT (YEAR 2002)

Council Members for year 2002:

Bradley Collins - Chairperson
Diane Spencer - Vice Chairperson
Patricia Deese – Secretary

Jeannie Bell-Nichols, Marguaree Branyon (OEEO), Diane Crawford, Darlene Dixon, Tommy Gates, Veronica Godfrey (BIG), Patricia Harris, Ronald Herbert, Wanda Holliday, Shu-Mei Huang, Phil Jones, Carolyn London (HRMB), Michelle Owens, Georgina Pagan, David Perry, John Peterson, Willie Purdie, Anna Lee Sabella (alternate), Latifa Elhadri (Alternate), Paul Johnson (Alternate), Elizabeth Ney (Alternate), Molly Vallant (NIH Catalyst), Helen Watson (AFGE), and Larry Wright.

January:

The Diversity Council met for the first time in calendar year 2002 on January 8th. The newly elected officers were introduced to the Diversity Council Members. Each member received a folder containing a copy of the charter, by-laws and the Diversity Council member roster. The day and time for the Council meetings was discussed and set for the second Monday of each month at 1:30 p.m.

The Council Chairperson discussed the history, purpose and responsibilities of the Diversity Council and read from the Charter (Article II) the specific purpose and function of the group. A sign-up sheet was circulated and each Council Member was asked to sign up for at least 2 subcommittees to help plan activities for each monthly program. The NIH catalyst, Molly Vallant, was introduced and her responsibilities were described to the Council members.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. program was presented on January 17th and included a video developed and produced by the sub-committee, featuring children from NIEHS and the Sterling Montessori School reciting excerpts from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech, "I have a Dream". Poetry, crafts, favorite black authors and scientists were displayed on the wall adjacent to the Building 101 conference area and in the glass case outside the cafeteria. This program was a huge success and received special mention from Dr. Olden.

February:

The monthly meeting was held on February 11, 2002.

The Council was tasked to promote disability awareness. The purchase of a motorized scooter for individuals with disabilities was discussed and a committee was established to work on providing policies and procedures for this purchase.

Group pictures were taken following the meeting.

The Black History Month Observance was held on February 26th. Dr. Trudier Harris-Lopez spoke on the topic “This Disease Called Strength: Black Female Characters in African American Literature”. The program featured the NIEHS Choir and the Hope Dancers from the Hope Charter School in Raleigh. A reception followed in the NIEHS Cafeteria.

March:

The monthly meeting was held on March 11, 2002.

The Women’s History Observance Committee developed a new lecture series called “The Spirit Lecture”. A plaque and award trophy was designed. The plaque will be placed in the Rall Building lobby. The inaugural *Spirit Lecture* was presented on March 22, 2002 by Dr. Anne Sassaman. The topic was “Life! - In Science”. A reception followed in the lobby of Building 101. This will become a yearly series.

April:

The monthly meeting was held on April 8, 2002.

The *Clerical/Administrative/Secretarial/ Technical (C.A.S.T.)* Committee planned a program to recognize Clerical/Administrative/Secretarial/ Technical employees. The program was presented on April 16, 2002. Certificates were made and signed by the Director and Division Directors for each honored person. Speakers were Sheila Newton (speaking for Dr. Olden) OD, Dr. Sassaman, DERT, Dr. Birnbaumer, DIR, and Dona McNeill (speaking for Ms. Little) OM.

May:

The monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on May 13, 2002.

The Asian/Pacific Islander program was held on May 22, 2002. The featured speaker was Dr. Muqurrab Qureshi from NC State University. The title of his talk was “Pakistan: The Past, the Present and the Future...A Socio-Cultural Ingredient”. Kerry Vallant performed an Indian dance. A reception featuring Asian foods was held in the cafeteria after the program.

Molly Vallant, the NIH Catalyst, reported on her NIH meeting with the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

June:

The monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on June 10, 2002.

Ways to recognize contract employees were discussed and it was decided that the FACTOR would feature a series of articles in future issues on contract employees.

The Women’s History Committee plans to have a follow-up meeting to discuss setting up a search committee for the Spirit Lecture Series.

July: No meeting was held for the month of July.

August:

The monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on August 12, 2002. NIEHS received the first scooter for the disabled.

Letters of Appreciation were presented to each member of the NIEHS Cafeteria Staff for their cooperation and assistance in supporting the NIEHS Diversity Council events. A special Appreciation Plaque was also presented to the manager and now hangs in the cafeteria.

The Committee voted to make a contribution to the Susan Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in memory of Dr. Jennifer Anderson.

September:

The monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on September 9, 2002. The *Hispanic Heritage Program* was held at 2:00 p.m. on September 26, 2002. Dr. Lutz Birnbaumer presented an introduction of the importance of Hispanic Heritage and then formally unveiled the poster identifying several Hispanic Scientists at NIEHS. This poster was designed by Maria Gallardo and was also displayed at NIH for their Hispanic Heritage Month celebration. Attendees then moved to the NIEHS cafeteria where they were provided with a Puerto Rican sampler of food. The program also featured music on the piano by Fernando Suarez.

NIEHS was represented at the La Fiesta Del Pueblo at Chapel Hill High School.

October:

The monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on October 7, 2002. The Disability Awareness Committee focused the October program on *hidden disabilities such as diabetes, epilepsy, learning disabilities, stuttering, ADHD*, etc. There were two speakers. Dr. Diana McNeill, an Endocrinologist at Duke Medical Center, spoke about diabetes and its effects on patients and family members. Mr. Mike Carter, from the School of Design at NC State University spoke on architectural barriers.

November:

The Diversity Council met on November 4, 2002.

Native American Heritage was the program featured for this month. On November 7th, Dr. Walt Wolfram, William C. Friday Distinguished Professor of English at UNC, spoke on the topic "Lumbee Language in Time and Place". A second program on November 21st featured Native American foods, arts and crafts. Foods were furnished by the Diversity Council members and served in the lobby of the Rall Building 101. Artists Anita Locklear and Gwen Locklear had arts and crafts set up in the lobby as well.

December:

The Diversity Council met on December 19, 2002.

This was the month for the *International Festival* celebration. The theme "Parade of Nations", featured a fashion show of ethnic dress, music by the NIEHS band, a puppeteer, holiday music by the Cary Singers and lot of food from many different

cultures. The committee recognized the outstanding assistance of Mr. Hollmeyer, mailroom employees and Dr. Chris Portier for an excellent job serving as master of ceremony for the event. Once again this year this event followed the annual Awards Ceremony and was co-sponsored by the Office of Management.